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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

State Dept. review completed

Top Secret

c 197

11 December 1971

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Approved For Release 2003/07/31 : CIA-RDP79T00975A020700030002-7

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LIBYA: Government continues to denounce UK while attempting to warm up to US. (Page 7)

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LIBYA: The government's punitive actions and propaganda continue to be aimed primarily at British rather than US interests.

Public demonstrations and press denunciations recently have concentrated mainly on British "collusion" in the Iranian seizure of the Persian Gulf islands. A small well-organized demonstration took place at the British Embassy on 9 December, and a rally of some two thousand persons hailed the nationalization of British Petroleum (BP).

The US ambassador met with the undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry on 7 December--the day of the BP nationalization--to prepare for talks aimed at a settlement of US-Libyan problems. The Libyan noted that such a settlement would open the way for new bilateral cooperation. He emphasized Libya's desire for future technical assistance programs and reported that Prime Minister Qadhafi recently had expressed keen interest in buying additional US military equipment.

Libyan authorities have not interfered with the US non-operating partner of BP, the Nelson Bunker Hunt Company, and apparently have no plans to do so. Other American oil companies have experienced recent Libyan attempts to monitor oil shipments. The companies believe, however, that this is merely a heavy-handed Libyan attempt to prevent BP from using other shippers to make up the shortfall. Attempts to exact higher payments in dollars from the oil companies have been conducted with little or no publicity.

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